# Principles of Leadership

Leadership principles are essential to the success of any military leader and their actions. They help to influence others to perform their duties in a way that produces the required results. As such, leadership principles offers the foundation for a system of belief within the armed forces. The United States army has identified seven basic principles that they believe are key to the success of their operations. Of these seven principles, this paper considers the principle of leading by example as the most important principle.

Leadership in itself is an act of setting an example to the subjects. Leaders must, intrinsically, translate their intentions into reality by acting on the set mission to prove to their subordinates that the command is doable. In essence, leadership is about demonstrating the leader’s beliefs and not just saying the beliefs. When leaders lead by example, they can influence their subordinates' behaviors, thoughts and attitude[[1]](#footnote-0). A good leader is a role model to others. Therefore, they need to demonstrate core leader competencies that will inspire others to emulate. However, as much as a leader may create a conducive learning environment for his or her subordinate leaders, if the team lacks inspiration, they will not learn much. Some of the trainees may begin to see the pieces of training as a form of punishment. However, if the leader is practicing the same, they will be open to learning more[[2]](#footnote-1). As a result, the leader will get the opportunity to impart adaptive and creativity skills to the subordinate leaders. Therefore, as recapped by the other principles, the principle of leading by example is vital and should be accomplished for better leadership in the army.

One principle requires that a leader should know their subordinates and their families. They should know the potential, abilities, and weaknesses of their subordinates[[3]](#footnote-2). This principle is heavily dependent on the principle of leading by example. When a leader is practically involved in the project, he or she will get to see everyone's potential. They will get to understand everybody at the individual level and find a way of encouraging or inspiring them to perform better. Nevertheless, knowing the subordinates and their families alone does not contribute to achieving the overall mission. Rather, it only helps the leader to understand the situation that the subordinate leader is undergoing to find a way of managing it. However, if the leader can demonstrate how to overcome the situation, it will help the subject to learn and adapt on how to handle the situation.

People may argue that a leader cannot lead by example in every task under every possible position. They may say that soldiers only need to excel in a few tasks and then adapt to others. However, to do this, soldiers would need to improve their ability to adapt. This ability can only be better refined through experience and by observing others as they do it. Essentially, the principle of leading by example makes the subordinates more engaged compared to the principle of learning to adapt. Therefore, the principle of leading by example is more important compared to the training of people to adapt to situations[[4]](#footnote-3).

Another reason why this paper considers the principle of leading by example as the most important principle is because the other principles focus more on the leader and his or her association with the subordinates, while this principle focuses on achieving the goals and mission of the army. The mission of the armed forces is to win the battle of securing the country, especially from external combats[[5]](#footnote-4). Therefore, the principle that can lead and unify the military for a common purpose, and at the same time, makes each member of the mission to feel as equal crew towards victory, is the defining significance of leading by example. The other principles mostly focus on how to train a subordinate[[6]](#footnote-5). For example, the principle of training adaptive leaders, the principle of training leaders to think critically and the principle of training leaders in the art and science of command.

In as much as all the other principles are essential, the principle of leading by example is the most important because it helps to encourage and inspire the subordinates to strive towards achieving the army mission. The other principles only offer a guideline of what a leader should do to get the best out of his or her subordinates, hence, they focus on the leader's own development. Ultimately, the principle of leading by example is for the betterment of the army leader and the entire troop.

## Bibliography

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2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. Department of the Army. 2012. *Training Units and Developing Leaders (Adrp 7-0)*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. Powell, L. R. M. 2017. *Examining the effects of leader influence on worker motivation*. Bourbonnais, Illinois: Olivet Nazarene University. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Demaine, Linda J., Jefferson P. Marquis, Kevin F. McCarthy, Jerry M. Sollinger, Brett D. Steele, and Thomas S. Szayna. 2007. *The civil-military gap in the United States: does it exist, why, and does it matter?* Santa Monica, CA: RAND. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. Department of the Army. 2012. *Training Units and Developing Leaders (Adrp 7-0)*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)